THE VISIONS OF Sir Heiſter Ryley: WITH OTHER ENTERTAINMENTS.

Wednesday December 20. 1710.

From the Light Regions, December 18.

The Continuation of the Viſion in the Elementary World.

BEING eſcaped out of Danger into the Pilot's Ark, and ſate down with him in his Cabin, he ask'd me from whence I came, and how long I had been floating on the broad Channel, in Diſtreſs, before he call'd to me. I told him I was driven into theſe remote Countries by meer Accident, and but lately arrived. Therefore I was looking out for Help, and wanted a Perſon to direct or guide me to ſome Land, where I might in the end return home either Wiſe or Rich. Sir (ſays he) if you are for Speculation, and improving your Mind in what is curious, I'll inſtruct you in the Laws and Cuſtoms of this Elementary World; and ſhew you the two Fleets of Arks that are now ſailing upon different Intentions. Matters of Speculation, and the improving of my Mind in Curioſities, I told him, were the only things I was in ſearch after, and that nothing could pleaſe me more, than to have an Opportunity of ſeeing all the Veſſels in both Channels ſet out from their ſeveral Ports, and proceeding on their Voyages to their deſigned Harbours; for by that means I ſhall every Day be making new Diſcoveries, be preſented with new Scenes, and behold ſtrange Accidents. When we had agreed upon every Point to our Satisfaction, we proceeded forwards, and after ſome Hours ſwift running before the Wind, we got ſight of a vaſt Number of Arks making up the broad Channel with crowded Sails. Coming up with them, I ſaw them ſteer towards a

wide Bay, where they ſlack'd their Sails, and drew up into Squadrons. The firſt Rate Arks were drawn into one Line at the head of the Bay, the ſecond Rate next to them, and ſo on in order, according to the Beauty of the Veſſels, or the Quality of the Inhabitants. Here I thought my ſelf ſwiming in more delicious Streams than the Heathens fancy'd themſelves in when they were worſhiping their Goddeſſes; for one while my Eyes were dazled with beholding the rich Gildings and Paintings of the Arks, and the gawdy Colours of their Streamers and Pendants. Then my Senſes would be lull'd in a ſweet Repoſe with the ruſtling Sails, the padling of Oars, and the diverſity of Languages that were heard in every Quarter; and that which was ſtill more amuſing to the Fancy of a Stranger, was, the Appearance of a Squadron of Arks which lay in the Center of the Lines, curiouſly built, as well for the Conveniency as the Deſign. Theſe Veſſels were ſet off with all the Trophies of Gallantry, which as they were ornamented with other fantaſtick Paintings and Devices, they carried the appearance of Arks of Pleaſure, and gave a great Grace to the reſt of the Veſſels. I ask'd the Pilot what uſe theſe delicate Arks were put to. He told me, they were for all ſorts of Diverſion; to theſe Veſſels many People reſorted of both Sexes, and I my ſelf thruſt in among the Crowd. The firſt Ark I came to appear'd like a Palace in Form and Extent; over the Stern upon the Image of a Goddeſs there was this Motto, *This is the Ark of Delight.* I went on board to view the ſpacious Veſſel, where I found many Cabins, ſome one two and three ſtory high, all finely ſet off with Pictures and Landskips; but I was here deafned with Muſick and Singing, and the jarring Clamours of Jollity, Oaths and Blaſphemies. In ſhort, I was ſtruck with Terror, and ſcarce knew what Courſe to take. As I paſs'd from one Place to another, ſeveral that ſaw me beckon'd me to come in; among the reſt a beautiful Damſel invited me into her Apartment. I ſtept in, and ſaw the Room illuminated with Wax Tapers, a Bed embroider'd with Gold, and Curtains drawn before the Windows. This Appearance ſerved to diſcover her Intention. I was going away, but ſhe laid hold of me, and would have drawn me into her Embraces with ſoft Words and wanton Charms. Madam (ſaid I) why ſo much Freedom with a Stranger? Do you know where your paſt Moments are fled? Have they made a Promiſe to come back at the inſtant when you ſtand in need of them? Did Yeſterday tell you ſhe would return and lend you a Day when your laſt Sands are in the Glaſs? Upon theſe Words ſhe let me go, and I paſs'd on to the next Cabin, where there ſate an Old Man by the ſide of a Young Lady, with his wither'd Hand ſhaking with the Palſey, round her Neck, wantonly gazing in her Face. I look'd at him, good Father (ſaid I) have you ever ſeen the Emblem of Wiſdom lock'd up in Priſon,

ſon, and Reaſon with both Eyes ſtark blind; view your ſelf, you are the Piece that repreſents ſuch Figures. I left him upon the Meditation, and continued my Progreſs. I found my ſelf, e'er I was aware, at a great Door which had a Magnifying Glaſs in it, that look'd into a large Room; this, the Fillete told me, was call'd, *The Cabinet of Beauties.* It was raiſed on one ſide in Imitation of a Stage; there I beheld new Wonders; I ſaw ſeveral Ladies ſporting and dancing by the light of a great many Lamps. There were two Doors; one to come in at, and another to go out. The firſt Man that enter'd I obſerved was a Prince; he took ſeveral Turns round the Stage, and ſeemed to be very difficult in his Choice. The Concubines, knowing that the moſt important Prize was then in view, ſtrove which ſhould gain his Admiration. Some by their Deputies pleaded much in favour either of their Birth, Beauty or Wit; ſome told the King they were Virgins juſt in the Flower of Youth, and come to pay their Duty to his Majeſty; others ſtood up mightily on their Merits, and the agreeableneſs of their Perſons or Dreſs. There was ſcarce one Accompliſhment belonging to the Female Sex but what was here delivered in fine Speeches, and the Appearance of Truth. Modeſty was one of the Articles firſt named among many of them; and in a few, even Vertue it ſelf. One Lady I obſerv'd ſtrove mightily to captivate the Heart of her Sovereign; ſhe had more than twenty fine Actions. Now and then ſhe would caſt a languiſhing look towards him with an Air of Innocency; and the better to ſet her ſelf off, ſhe would frequently be a ſhading her Face, withdrawing from the blaze of the Tapers, behind the Scenes; then ſhe appear'd again with her delicate white Hand adjuſting her Scarf, or pulling the Handkerchief that muſt be taken from her more Alabaſter Neck to put it on again after ſome other careleſs manner: This Miſtreſs of Pleaſure the King carry'd off as his *Batiſheba.* The next Perſon that came in, was an Admiral of a Fleet: Upon his Appearance, the Company caſt Glances at him, and ſome gain'd the Advantage of drawing nearer to him, out of a Pretence to put in order a Curl or Lock of Hair, that was laid aſide by the Wind of a Fan, or the Touch of a Finger: Theſe pretty Turns of Fancy immediately mov'd the Affections of the Gentleman, and he quickly made choice of one of theſe Ladies of Fortune: Then enter'd a Perſon of Honour; after that a Courtier, and ſo on till the Stage was cleared of the Female Congregation. I followed theſe celebrated Beauties, as they appear'd to be by the Twilight, and view'd many of them before the bright Sun; I ſaw they were only artificially ſet off with a White and Red, that Nature never gave them. One Lady, whom I took particular notice of, and thought Fortune had beſtow'd upon her a Birth, exceeding all other Women, both in Charms and Beauty; I kept cloſe to this Angel, and went the

next Morning, to ſee her in an Undreſs, ſtript of her gawdy Plumes: Here I was ſurprized, and could ſcarce believe it was the ſame Mortal: I endeavour'd by gazing at her, to find wherein I thought her lovely: Then I took the Image to pieces, and ſearch'd into every Lineament of her Face; and ſhe appear'd to be a mean Gipſy, the very Picture of Deformity, only made up by Art: All that I could behold in her of a Woman; ſhe had Life, Motion, and the Shape of one: But that which gave my Humour the ſevereſt Check, was the looking into a private Retirement of this old piece of Painting, the little inner Cabin where ſhe plaiſter'd her ſelf with Paint and Varniſh: Upon one Shelf there ſtood a Bottle of ſweet Water, a Vial with Eſſence, and a Box with Powder; on another, a Pot of Pomatum, a Paper of Patches, a Drawer with ten Partitions, all fill'd with Ointments, *Spaniſh* Wool, Iſſue-Peas and Plaiſters, and other very uſeful Materials, neceſſary for the repairing of a putrid Carcaſs. This Monſter of Deformity led my Curioſity to make ſeveral other Viſits; and in thoſe my Travels, I eſpyed the King's and Admiral's Ladies, with ſeveral others, and among thoſe choice Relicks, was a melancholy Proſpect; for tho' they were in the Prime of their Youth, had fair Faces and fine Shapes, yet ſome were worn out even to Skeletons; they were weak and infeebled. A talking with them I heard a Groaning, as if one had been ſtung with Scorpions: I enquir'd into the occaſion, and was told, they were Courtiſans wringing their Hands, and tearing their Hair, with the very Anguiſh of the Pains, and Aches of their Youth. If there are (thought I) ſo many Deluſions and falſe Appearances to be ſeen in one Ark; what a Hiſtory of Diſcourſes ſhall I collect of Amuſements, that are ſhadowed out in a thouſand different Scenes among a number of Arks that are ſcarce to be counted with the Stars! While I was upon theſe Contemplations, the old Man and the young Lady whom I admoniſh'd ſeparately in their Cabbins, came and told me they were become Proſelytes: Theſe two Perſons the Pilot carry'd over in his Ark to the narrow Channel, thro' a ſmall Lake, where many Arks paſs'd backwards and forwards: For ſome Perſons I obſerved, that had gone a great way up the narrow River, with a Reſolution to ſail to the *Canaan*-ſhoar; were tired with the Fatigues of that Voyage, and return'd back: Others again, who were driving with full Sails to the dark Gulph, tack'd about, and paſs'd on the other ſide.

The remaining part of this Viſion muſt be referr'd to another Paper.

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